the department showed a decline from Rs. 5,64,460 in 1089 to Rs. 5,40,839 in 1090, it will be seen that the fall was only apparent, as there was a sum of Rs. 2,08,053 outstanding at the close of the year, the major portion of which has been realised in 1091. I am not a believer in the virtue of any abnormal net revenue from this department, as the key-note of successful forest administration is a liberal expenditure of money in conserving the forests, so as to ensure an unfailing supply of timber for all time. The department is now provided with a trained, competent and adequate staff. Four of the superior officers of the department had their training in Europe, sixteen in Dehra Dun, three in Poona and eleven in Coimbatore: With the exception of the Shendurni Working Circle and the Teak Plantations, all the reserves are now worked only under the old scheme, without any carefully thought-out working plan. The working plan reports in respect of several reserves are under preparation and the Government have directed the Conservator to see to their early submission. The question of the extension of forest communications is also engaging attention and the Government will not stint the necessary economic expenditure in this direction.

13. **Salt.**—The total quantity of salt consumed fell from 9,81,454 maunds to 9,67,441 maunds and the average consumption per head of population from 23·7 lbs. to 23·3 lbs. The war affected the purchasing power of the poorer classes even in respect of salt and hence the decline. The area of salt pans worked in South Travancore was 295 acres against 305 acres in 1089, the Tattarippu Odai factory having been abandoned by the licensees. The total out-turn of home-made salt fell from 5,39,521 to 3,41,639 maunds. This heavy decline in the out-turn was due to the abnormal rainfall during the North-East Monsoon, which retarded the commencement of the manufacturing operations in Thye. In view of the doubtful advantage of importing large quantities of Tuticorin salt, the import of this article was restricted to a lakh of maunds during the year. It is anticipated that the policy of encouraging the extension of salt manufacture in South Travancore, if steadily followed, will result in making Travancore self-sufficient in regard to her salt supply.

14. **Abkari.**—The contract distillery supply system in regard to arrack, under which the right of manufacturing arrack is separated from the right of vend, and the latter right sold by auction, shop by shop, was extended to the whole State except the Devicolam taluk, while the independent shop system in regard to toddy, with its accompaniment of tree-tax, was extended to the taluks of Changanachery, Kottayam, Ettumanur, Minachil and Peermade. The taluks of Shertalay (except that portion of it which forms part of the town of Alleppey), Vaikam, Muvattupuzha, Todupuzha, Kunnatnad, Alangad and Parur alone remain under the old taluk contract system. There was no sale of toddy in the Devicolam taluk. Unlike in the Madras Presidency where liquor shops are annually sold by auction, the abkari contracts in the State are given for two years at a time. With each renewal of the biennial contracts, a systematic reduction is being effected in the number of shops, and the price of liquor is increased as far as possible. In connection with the reduction of country-liquor shops, the following figures will be interesting :—

Year.	*Number of shops.*
1083	7,050
1084	5,103
1086	4,634
1088	2,462
1090	2,273

It will be seen that, in the course of seven years, the number of these shops in the State has been reduced by 68 per cent. The number of toddy shops in the excise area also fell from 1704 in 1089 to 1531 in 1090. The rates of still-head duty were raised in the year by 10 annas per proof gallon, both in regard to cocoanut-toddy arrack and jaggery arrack. The tree-tax rules were revised and the rates increased in 1090. The proverthies of Parassala, Kollayil and Kulattur in the Neyyattinkara taluk, which had been exempted from the operation of the sweet toddy rules in 1085,

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